



WITHDRAWN

TO THE BOARDS OF TRUSTEES, INSPECTORS,
AND TEACHERS.

APPROVED SCHOOLS.

Regulation 45, of 1904, rescinded last October, provided for a system of Approved Schools as follows :

APPROVED HIGH, PUBLIC, AND SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

45.—(1) At his official visits, the High, Public, or Separate School Inspector shall satisfy himself as to the character and extent of the provision in the schools under his charge for carrying out all the regulations affecting the preparation of candidates for non-professional certificates ; and, without his approval of the School, no candidate therefrom shall be admitted to the examination for such certificates without examination in the subjects of Part I. for a District or a Junior Non-professional certificate, as provided for in Regulation 49 (1).

(2) At each inspection, the Principal shall submit for the approval of the Inspector the work of the candidates in Book-keeping and Business Papers and in Art, and their note-books in Science.

The subjects of Part I. referred to in (1) above were : Reading, Book-keeping and Business Papers, Art, and Elementary Science of the Lower School course of the High Schools.

For many years the public had regarded the results of the official examinations as the test of the competency of the teacher as well as of the pupil. The consequences were inevitable. These examinations became the dominant influence in the schools. Not only was the main object of education—the formation of character—too often lost sight of, but the examination stress affected injuriously the methods of teaching and the content of the courses, and the preparation of many pupils for the duties of life was altogether inadequate. The above quoted Regulation was intended, it is well understood, to improve the situation in the High Schools, and, with the improvement of the situation in the Public Schools also in view, a similar change was made in the provisions for the High School Entrance examination. The Regulation did give the teacher more freedom and it did reduce the examination stress during the first two or three years of the pupils' course beyond the Fourth Form of the Public Schools. But, even in these respects, it was only a partial measure of

reform. Complaints have, indeed, increased of late that, in very many cases, the products of our Secondary Schools do not possess what have long been regarded as the essentials of a practical education. They are too often poor in Spelling, Penmanship, Reading, and Letter-writing; and in the elementary operations of Arithmetic they are lacking in speed and accuracy. These complaints are well founded. Even if the Departmental and University examinations were suitable for pupils intended for commercial and industrial pursuits, which they are not, the examination test in the foregoing subjects is quite inadequate. With so many examination centres, there could be no adequate test of a candidate's ability to read, and, in any event, it would be regarded by the public as unjustifiable to reject him; that is, to put him to an additional year's labour and expense because he was a poor reader. So, too, if his Spelling or his Penmanship were poor, or his Letter-writing lacked the proper form, or his Arithmetic answers were inaccurate in details. In Arithmetic, indeed, under our system, he might obtain high marks for the principles of the problems even if all his answers were inaccurate in other respects. Accordingly, as has already been announced in Circular 19, the Education Department proposes, as a step in the regeneration of the system, to conduct the examinations for entrance to the training schools for the sole purpose of testing the competency of candidates for teachers' certificates; and to extend the "Approved School" system to the subjects of Writing, Spelling, Arithmetic and Mensuration, English Grammar, and Geography. As a consequence, henceforth the examination stress will be removed from all the Lower School subjects, the special preparation of the intending teacher will be transferred to the training schools, and greater freedom will be given the Secondary School staff during the first two or three years of the pupil's course, when such freedom is most needed. A thorough academic course is now provided in the Normal Schools, and no candidate will be allowed to pass the final examinations without a competent knowledge of all the subjects he will have to teach in the Public Schools, including, of course, Geography, English Grammar, and Arithmetic and Mensuration. As far as practicable at present, the same provision has been made in the Faculties of Education, and the same provision will be made in the Model Schools of the future. It is also the policy of the Education Department to increase the importance of the teacher's personality, and, in this way, to allow the formation of character to become the main function of the schools. Moreover, subject to judicious Departmental control and direction, it is the aim of the Education Department to place upon the Trustees and the Teachers the responsibility for providing, according to local needs, the education for his life work which every pupil has the right to receive. As a result largely of the dominant examination influences, our school system has failed to take sufficient account of our economic condition. We have educated too many for clerical and professional pursuits, in which there is little room, and too few for industrial

pursuits, in which there is always room. The future of Ontario demands that this shall cease.

But the Approved School scheme of 1904 did not fully realize the expectations of its promoters. Diversities of standards and laxity of administration resulted from the inadequacy of its provisions. The appointment in 1906 of an Inspector of Continuation Classes, in addition to the Inspectors of High Schools, has removed the main defect in the machinery. The new scheme will, accordingly, be carried into effect by a small number of Inspectors, who will confer together from time to time, and who are controlled by and are directly responsible to the Minister of Education. In this connection, it may be noted that, in 1909, when the scheme goes into full operation, the Normal Schools will not re-open until the last week in September. Candidates from non-approved schools will, accordingly, have ample time to review the subjects for the September examination of the Normal Schools and the October examination of the Faculties of Education; and the postponement of the examinations from the close of the Lower School course until these dates, will relieve from immediate pressure the Lower School of non-approved schools. In explanation it may be added that, beginning in 1909, the members of the staffs of the Normal Schools will hold Institutes of Instruction for Public School teachers during the month of September in the counties and districts of the Province.

From the Regulation of last October, which is quoted below, it will be seen that, while the Minister accepts the Principal's certificate as having been honestly given, every reasonable precaution has been taken to protect the interests of the training schools and of general education. It is, of course, understood that to remain upon the Approved list a school must maintain the excellence of its standard from year to year.

APPROVED HIGH SCHOOLS AND CONTINUATION CLASSES.

7. An approved High School or Continuation Class shall be one which fulfils the following conditions:

(1) The Departmental Inspector concerned shall certify as follows to the Minister of Education and to the Dean of each Faculty of Education and the Principal of each Normal School:

(a) That the provision for teaching the Lower School subjects enumerated in Regulation 6 is adequate and satisfactory. For the purposes of this certificate, Continuation Classes shall be under the same Regulations as to equipment and the programme and time-table of studies as are the High Schools. (See Regulations 34 and 40 (1) of 1904, and Regulation 40 (2) as amended in Circular 19 of 1907.)

(b) That the pupils' work in the courses prescribed in Regulation 6 is satisfactory. For the purposes of this certificate, the Inspector concerned shall examine the classes as he may deem it expedient, and the pupils' work since last inspection, in Book-keeping and Business Papers, and Art, and their note-books in Science, which work and note-books

the Principal concerned will preserve from inspection to inspection, as the Inspector concerned may direct.

(2) The preparation of the pupils, as evidenced by their work throughout the session, shall have been satisfactory to the Dean of the Faculty of Education and the Principal of the Normal School. In the case of schools in which the preparation has not been satisfactory, the Dean or the Principal shall report the facts to the Minister of Education and to the Inspector concerned.

The subjects of Regulation 6, referred to in (a) above, are the following of the Lower School course of the High Schools:

Reading, Writing, Spelling, Book-keeping and Business Transactions, Art, Biology, Geography, English Grammar, and Arithmetic and Mensuration.

Notice is also hereby given that, in the Faculties of Education, the certificate for the foregoing subjects or the examination therein in October will be required only in the case of candidates for a Public School Teacher's Certificate, and that no additional fee will be charged for this examination in the case of either the Faculty of Education or the Normal Schools.

When at his regular visit the Inspector finds the school equipment adequate, the staff competent, the organization acceptable, the time-table suitable, and the pupils' work satisfactory, he is justified in assuming that, given the teacher's honesty and zeal, the final preparation of the pupils will also prove to be satisfactory. Be it noted, also, that, at the discretion of the Inspector, a school may be paid a second visit during the year. With special ability on the part of a pupil or a teacher or of both, schools which, from the point of view of equipment and organization, fall below the prescribed standard, may, it is true, also produce satisfactory results. But, at his visit, the Inspector is not in a position to pronounce upon the situation; and, for testing such results, an examination has necessarily been provided.

For the Session of 1908 to 1909 of the Normal Schools and Faculties of Education, a modification of the September examinations is necessary, as most of the pupils who will enter in 1908 are now in the Middle or the Upper School, having taken their Lower School subjects under Regulation 45 of 1904, which is quoted above and which was in force till last October. Accordingly, in the case of pupils from schools which the Inspectors have not approved for 1907 to 1908, the entrance examinations of the Normal Schools next September and of the Faculties of Education at Toronto and Queen's next October will be confined to Geography, English Grammar, and Arithmetic and Mensuration, as defined in the Lower School course of the High Schools; provided, however, the candidates submit to the Principal, or the Dean, as the case may be, the certificate required under Regulation 45 of 1904. Moreover, for the Session of 1908 to 1909, the consideration which, since 1904, has been extended to candidates from schools outside of the Provincial system will be continued. Such candi-

dates must present certificates from their teachers, certifying in detail that they have completed the Lower School courses enumerated under Regulation 45 on page 1 of this circular; and, like the candidates from High Schools or Continuation Classes which have not been approved, they must also pass the prescribed examinations in Geography, English Grammar, and Arithmetic and Mensuration.

Notice is hereby given that, at the September and October examinations of 1909 and thereafter, all candidates from non-approved schools will be expected to show a practical knowledge of Biology and of the use of both pencil and brush in Art work. Having regard to the preceding requirements, teachers of High Schools and Continuation Classes should note that suitable Summer Schools will be provided next July at the University of Toronto, in Art and Science, as well as in other subjects of the High School programme. They should also note that under Regulation 39 (8) as amended on page 9 of Circular 19, any subject not satisfactorily completed by July in the Lower School may be provided for at any time in the pupil's subsequent course in the High Schools or Continuation Classes.

Moreover, as the number of the obligatory subjects at the July examination for entrance to the Normal Schools has been reduced from ten to seven, a higher standard of answers than heretofore will be expected from the candidates. In the Normal Schools, less attention will be paid to the purely academic side of these subjects than to that of the other, and, in most cases, more important subjects of the Public School course. Hereafter, also, one of the Latin papers will consist of Authors and Sight Work, with suitable questions on the Authors, and the other paper of Latin Composition and Grammar.

The Minister of Education regards the present extension of the Approved School scheme as a most important step in advance. He confidently counts upon the sympathetic co-operation of all who know what education really is, and he hopes that the success of the scheme will justify him in extending it still further in both the High Schools and the Public Schools. The personality of the teacher, he believes, should become a far more important factor in the adaptation of our schools to the necessities of the Province. The examination holds an important place in any well-ordered system of education; but a system which depends mainly upon the stimulus of examinations conducted by outsiders and dwarfs the teacher's sense of responsibility cannot build up the character of our youth or prepare them for the diverse duties of life.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT,

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